



SKILLS FOR LIFE SUPPORT PROGRAMME

LONGDEN LTD

FINAL REPORT

Theme: Embedding literacy, language and numeracy through a Whole Organisation Approach

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Date : 18 March 2010

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This resource was produced as part of the Effective Practice Projects on the Skills for Life Support for World Class Skills Programme 2009.

LONGDEN LTD CASE STUDY

Background & Aims

Longden Ltd is a private training provider delivering a range of learning solutions within the West Midlands region. Alongside qualification-based programmes, leadership development and teambuilding events, Longden Ltd also delivers Skills for Life numeracy and literacy programmes at Levels 1 and 2.

In order to support the business aim of developing a blended learning approach, we applied for LSIS funding via the SFLSP to produce:

- A .pdf guide to using a VLE to support blended learning for 3 SFL Numeracy tutors delivering Skills for Life programmes
- Safeguarding and Access (Equality and Diversity) policies to support flexible learning opportunities

We limited the scope of the project to focus on the development of a VLE to support numeracy learners and three numeracy tutors.

What we did

We researched how other providers have adopted technology to support numeracy teaching and learning and conducted a comprehensive literature search (backed by academic SUNCETT and DTLLS studies) of blended learning theories and frameworks. We also attended a variety of e-CPD programmes which have developed knowledge and contacts; attended the LSIS Connect training day which led to ILT strategy linked to the 4Ps of marketing (Product, Place, Promotion, People); actively networked and benchmarked against other providers worldwide both small and large-scale. Finally, we reviewed our research findings, adopted the frameworks to suit our needs and identified the nine key elements to consider when designing blended learning solutions (see diagrams in Section 8).

The key project team members reviewed Longden's infrastructure, staffing, culture, market focus, products and ways of working to ensure it was 'fit for purpose' for the introduction of blended learning. One team member attended a 2-day remote course via Dimdim (an online virtual meeting space) which led to confidence and competence using Web2.0 technologies, such as skype video-link conversations, social networking sites such as ning, blogs, twitter, dimdim online meeting space, hot potatoes interactive quiz creator, screen-casts using screenr to show websites with a voice-over commentary, powerpoint slide sharing software (slideshare). The other key member worked on the infrastructure, system installation, product development, marketing strategy and branding.

We opted for Moodle as it is opensource, easy to use, has a support network and is favoured by many large organisations across the world. Two IT experts were engaged to assist with setting up the Moodle site, branding it (www.longdenmoo.com) and advising on how we could optimise its potential. We experimented and learnt how to use the VLE, upload resources, link activities, design chunks of learning, adapt worksheets into interactive learning objects and identified existing numeracy resources which were adapted for interactive use within the VLE. There are many resources available which can be easily adapted using the tools within Moodle. Tips are to make the activities short (maximum 10 minutes long), easy to follow with immediate feedback of results; use a variety of activities so that the learner experiences different quizzes, tasks, factsheets – this should appeal to all learning styles; enable the learner to access activities more than

once – they are useful for revision and practising test questions; provide links to reputable websites, such as BBC Skillswise, MoveOn.

We created a guidance document “How to use the VLE” (See Index in Appendix 1) to assist tutors in using the VLE and presented this at a meeting. Initial feedback was that the guidance was useful but a bit ‘dry’ – hardgoing to read a manual and they would prefer an alternative delivery method. Taking this on board, we supplemented the guidance document with screen-casts (<http://screenr.com/JKh> and <http://screenr.com/fKh>) which the tutors can click to view and listen, repeatedly if necessary. In addition, we held interactive online meetings which provided shared viewing of the presenter’s live screen and real-time commentary to demonstrate how to carry out certain tasks. We also created VLE-based modules and tasks for the tutors to complete so that they experienced using the VLE as a learner, gained an understanding of the VLE’s capabilities and learnt some IT skills at the same time. We have also recorded screen-casts showing learners how to register online, enrol on a course and submit assignments for marking – the tutors can use these to familiarise their learners with the VLE.

Longden registered as a UK Online Centre so we can offer our learners the Online Basics programme to enhance their IT knowledge and skills, thus enabling them to use the software.

We researched guidance and examples of good practice for safeguarding, equality and diversity policies across various sectors, then generated the Longden Ltd policies and uploaded them onto the websites. A hard copy of the policies was sent to the staff who were invited to see clarification, if required. The policies will be reviewed on an annual basis and whenever new legislation appears.

What we produced

- Access 24/7 to a virtual learning environment
- ‘Click, watch and listen’ screen-casts on how to login to the LongdenMoo.com <http://screenr.com/JKh>, and how to register for the LongdenMoo.com! <http://screenr.com/fKh>
- A Level 1 Adult Numeracy programme with curriculum-based topics presented in chunks
- Social learning environment enabling learners to communicate and share ideas and thoughts
- Facility for learners to design and upload their own numeracy learning content thus reinforcing learner accountability and responsibility for applying and extending their own learning
- Interactive quizzes, tests, drag-and-drop tasks (see screenshot of Moodle interactive quiz design page at Appendix 2)
- Individual Learning Plan which can be updated by the tutor and learner via the VLE between classroom sessions for tutors to comment on progress in session, give feedback and guidance on VLE-based homework activities
- Links to websites such as Move On, BBC Skillswise
- Links to online numeracy practice tests which provide instant results and feedback of gaps to the learner
- A discussion forum for learners to use for sharing and communication
- Policies on safeguarding, equality and diversity were created and embedded onto company website, VLE and social networking sites

Benefits

There have been many benefits identified for all stakeholders. The project team have developed a deeper understanding of blended and e-learning with associated theories and pedagogy; knowledge and experience in how to use a VLE to support a blended approach to learning; a multimedia guidance on how to use the VLE; confidence in using new technology; proven ability to translate a traditionally delivered numeracy programme into a blended programme where the learner takes more responsibility for self-directed learning; improved efficiency and effectiveness of how learning is delivered. We have also produced clear policies available to all 24/7 in the event of an incident relating to safeguarding, equality or diversity.

The tutors have gained from guidance delivered in a variety of forms to suit their personal preference. They have also had the experience of completing online modules so that they can appreciate the learner's perspective of using the VLE. Once they have learnt how to use and upload activities and resources into one programme, they will be able to do so in other programmes therefore increasing their resource bank and offerings to the learners. Tutor confidence in using technology has also improved.

The learner has gained increased choice of learning method giving a more personalised learner journey. They still receive face-to-face teaching and support, but this is now supplemented by online learning and reinforcement between classroom sessions. We have also created an online community of learners so that they can communicate, share and support each other virtually.

We feel that we have met the LSIS principles of delivering "just what the learner needs" by creating an accessible, blended programme for a key skill area.

Next steps

- To disseminate learning to all tutors
- To involve and support tutors in designing and uploading resources for their programmes – this will help them to learn how to use the VLE, gain confidence and competence whilst being supported to produce quality outputs
- To extend blended approach to other programmes including literacy and qualification-based programmes
- To design complete e-learning programme for distance learners
- To keep up-to-date with developments in blended and e-learning approaches
- To keep up-to-date with developments in safeguarding, equality and diversity

Key learning points

- Trial and error is a great learning method
- Don't be afraid of the technology – embrace it!
- Use the experts – many web-based discussion forums offer free advice (See Appendix 3 for example of online guide for using Hot Potatoes software)
- Learn from what others have produced – can you adapt or improve upon it?
- Always remember that the aim is to support the learner, not confuse them with the technology
- Only use technology to support the teaching and learning – not because it is fun!
- Approach the project a step at a time – set milestones to achieve by key dates
- Regularly reflect and learn from experience
- Have fun – play with the system to find out its capabilities
- Take the role of the learner so you get a different perspective
- Celebrate successes and failures – you learn from both

Further Contact

If you would like further information, please contact Jane Whittaker via email
janewhittaker@longden.co.uk

APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Index of Longden Ltd's "How to use the VLE" Guide

Appendix 2

Screenshot of Moodle Interactive Quiz Design Page

Appendix 3

Front page of helpful online guide to using Hot Potatoes quiz design software

Appendix 4

Videos filmed by Longden Ltd learners to show numeracy learning in action!

Appendix 5

Longden Ltd Safeguarding, Equality & Diversity Policies

APPENDIX 1

Index of Longden Ltd's "How to use the VLE" Guide

Adding Course Content

Table of Contents


| | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| Navigating to the Correct Course | Error! Bookmark not defined. |
| Adding a Web Page | Error! Bookmark not defined. |
| Adding a Link or a File to the Course..... | Error! Bookmark not defined. |
| Add an Assignment..... | Error! Bookmark not defined. |
| Adding a Chat | Error! Bookmark not defined. |
| Adding a Choice | Error! Bookmark not defined. |
| Add a Database..... | Error! Bookmark not defined. |
| Add a Forum | Error! Bookmark not defined. |
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| Adding a Quiz..... | Error! Bookmark not defined. |
| Creating Categories for your Quiz Questions..... | Error! Bookmark not defined. |
| Creating Quiz Questions | Error! Bookmark not defined. |
| Add a Survey..... | Error! Bookmark not defined. |
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| Creating Wiki Pages | Error! Bookmark not defined. |

APPENDIX 2


SCREENSHOT OF MOODLE INTERACTIVE QUIZ DESIGN PAGE

Quick Quiz - Adding and Subtracting Decimals


[Start again](#)

Question 1 
Marks: --/1
Add together 3.145 and 1.542
Answer:


[Submit](#)

Question 2 
Marks: --/1
Add 15.577 to 3.566
Answer:


[Submit](#)

Question 3 
Marks: --/1
Add 5.55 to 5.55
Answer:


[Submit](#)

Question 4 
Marks: --/1
 $3.596 - 1.485 = ?$
Answer:

[Submit](#)

Question 5 
Marks: --/1
 $6.328 - 4.539 = ?$
Answer:

[Submit](#)

Question 6 
Marks: --/1
What is 17.125 minus 10.750?
Answer:

[Submit](#)

Question 7 

Marks: --/1

Add 7.934 to 2.871

Answer:

Submit

Question 8 

Marks: --/1

What is 7.289 minus 6.837?

Answer:

Submit

Question 9 

Marks: --/1

Add together 101.98 and 110.98

Answer:

Submit

Question 10 

Marks: --/1

$99.99 - 87.87 = ?$

Answer:

Submit

Save without submitting

Submit page

Submit all and finish



You are logged in as [Jane Whittaker](#) ([Logout](#))

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APPENDIX 3

Front page of helpful online guide to using Hot Potatoes quiz design software
(Please enter url to enter full guide)

A Step-by-Step Guide to getting started with Hot Potatoes

Hot Potatoes Software: <http://web.uvic.ca/hrd/hotpot/>

Andrew Balaam

Objectives: To put together a short cycle of exercises linked together based on the topic of animals. Examples here are in French, but feel free to choose your own language!

Instructions

Before you begin work you will need to create a Folder called **Animals** into which you can save your work. When creating a cycle of Hot Potatoes exercises it is important that all exercises and any associated pictures, sounds or videos making up a unit are contained in **one** folder. I suggest that the folder should be on the hard drive of your computer. Into the folder that you've called **Animals**, copy the pictures and sounds from the Animals folder on the Toolkit CD. You are now ready to start work.

The Hot Potatoes Front Page:

The screenshot shows the 'Half-Baked Software's Hot Potatoes' interface. The title bar reads 'Half-Baked Software's Hot Potatoes' and the menu bar includes 'File', 'Potatoes', 'Options', and 'Help'. The main header features the 'Hot Potatoes' logo (a hand holding a potato), the text 'Hot Potatoes™ From Half-Baked Software Inc', and 'Version 6'. The main content area displays several potato icons, each labeled with an exercise type: 'JQuiz', 'JCross', 'JMix', 'JCloze', and 'JMatch'. To the right is 'The Masher' icon, which includes a potato masher and potatoes. Five callout boxes with arrows point to these icons:

- 'Create a gap-fill exercise' points to JCloze.
- 'Create a short-answer or multi-choice Quiz' points to JQuiz.
- 'Create an interactive crossword' points to JCross.
- 'Create a jumbled-sentence exercise' points to JMix.
- 'Create a match-up exercise' points to JMatch.

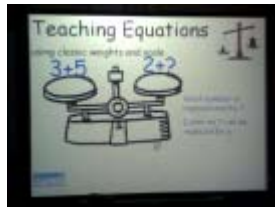
APPENDIX 4

VIDEOS FILMED BY LONGDEN LTD LEARNERS TO SHOW NUMERACY LEARNING IN ACTION! *These videos are located on our ning (social learning network) which is accessible to all Longden Ltd learners.*



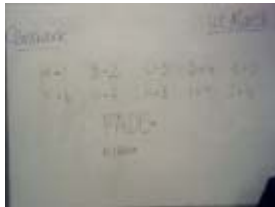
- **Teaching equivalences 0:35**

Jane Whittaker Mar 5 4 views



- **Teaching equations 0:58**

Getting the balance right... Jane Whittaker Mar 5 7 views



- **Wordcount 0:55**

Combining literacy and numeracy - clever Krisztina! Jane Whittaker Mar 5 7 views



- **Smartie divisions & fractions 01:32**

Sharing and dividing chocolate... Jane Whittaker Mar 5 4 views



-

Range with smarties 0:32

Fun learning with chocolate Jane Whittaker Mar 5 2 views



Hours worked to pay for toy 0:46

How to calculate how many hours you will need to work to pay for a new toy... Jane Whittaker Mar 5 13 views



Dotty counting 0:48

A visual way for people to learn to count Jane Whittaker Mar 5 1 view



Pizza fractions 0:53

Sharing and dividing with pizza - yum yum! Jane Whittaker Mar 5 1 view



Maths in cooking 0:32

We use maths everyday in the kitchen! Jane Whittaker Mar 5 2 views



Distance div by speed = time 0:48

You can calculate a journey time if you know the distance and speed of travel [Jane Whittaker](#) Mar 5 4 views



▪ **Area 0:57**

[Jane Whittaker](#) Mar 5



▪ **6 to 10 times table on your fingers 01:11**

Krisztina shows us another trick! [Jane Whittaker](#) Mar 5 4 views



▪ **Area & Perimeter 01:32**

[Jane Whittaker](#) Mar 4 1 view



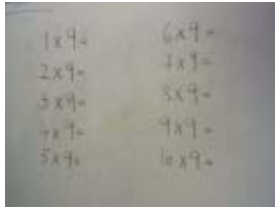
▪ **25% same as a quarter 01:19**

[Jane Whittaker](#) Mar 4 2 views



▪ **Large Number 01:09**

Donna and Sharon show us how to make the largest possible number with a given set of digits [Jane Whittaker](#) Mar 4 4 views



9 times table 01:22

Krisztina shows us how to do the 9 times table [Jane Whittaker](#) Mar 4 2 views



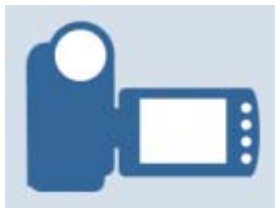
How to calculate volume 01:55

Here Ina explains how to calculate volume in case you need to fill up your oil tanker! An everyday u... [Ina Ihnken](#) Feb 19 18 views



How to divide in the snow! 04:48

Here Ina demonstrates how they calculate in Germany! She is using the nearest snowfall to show how... [Ina Ihnken](#) Feb 19 10 views



Improve your IT Skills here

How to get started using computers. Complete the Online Basics modules today! Tags: basics, online [Carole Longden](#) Feb 15 14 views



Enjoy maths 1

An easy way to learn your 9 x table [Carole Longden](#) Feb 7 20 views

APPENDIX 5

Longden Ltd Safeguarding, Equality & Diversity Policies

Longden Ltd believes that it is always unacceptable for a child or young person to experience abuse of any kind and recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people by a commitment to practice which protects them.

We recognise that:

- the welfare of the child/young person is paramount
- all children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

The purpose of the policy is:

- to provide protection for the children and young people who receive Longden Ltd's services, including the children of adult members or users
- to provide staff and volunteers with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a child or young person may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm.

This policy applies to all staff, including senior managers, paid staff, volunteers and workers, agency staff, students or anyone working on behalf of Longden Ltd.

We will seek to safeguard children and young people by:

- valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- adopting child protection guidelines through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers
- sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training.

We are also committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.

Code of Conduct for adults working with children or young people

Introduction

This section outlines the behaviour expected of staff, volunteers, learners and staff from other organisations who engage with children and young people through the Longden Ltd's activities.

Purpose

This code has been developed to provide advice which will not only help to protect children, but will also help identify any practices which could be mistakenly interpreted and perhaps lead to false allegations of abuse being made against individuals. Following this good practice code will also help to protect Longden Ltd by reducing the possibility of

anyone using their role within the organisation to gain access to children in order to abuse them.

When working with children and young people, all staff, volunteers and learners are considered to be acting in a position of trust. It is therefore important that staff, volunteers and learners are aware that they may be seen as role models by children and must act in an appropriate manner at all times and follow the code of conduct. All members of staff and volunteers are expected to report any breaches of this code to Carole Longden, Managing Director. Staff who breach this code of conduct may be subject to disciplinary procedures. Any breach of this code involving a volunteer or member of staff from another agency may result in them being asked to leave the project. Serious breaches of this code may also result in a referral being made to a statutory agency such as the Police or Children's Services Department.

When working with children and young people it is important to:

- always follow the organisation's child protection policy
- listen to and respect children at all times
- always avoid favouritism
- treat children and young people fairly and without prejudice
- value and take children's contributions seriously
- always ensure equipment is used appropriately and for the purpose it was designed for
- ensure any contact with children and young people is appropriate and in relation to the work of the project
- always ensure language is appropriate and not offensive or discriminatory
- follow the ICT safety policy and report any breaches
- actively involve children and young people in planning activities wherever possible
- provide examples of good conduct you wish others to follow
- challenge unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations/suspensions of abuse.

You must not:

- patronise or treat children and young people as if they are silly
- allow allegations to go unreported
- develop inappropriate relationships such as contact with children and young people that is not a part of the work of the project and agreed with the manager or leader. Sexual relationships between any adult member of staff or volunteer and a child or young person using Longden Ltd's services represent a serious breach of trust and are not permissible in any circumstances
- let children and young people have your personal contact details (mobile number or address)
- use sarcasm or insensitive comments to children and young people
- act in a way that can be perceived as threatening or intrusive
- make inappropriate promises to children and young people, particularly in relation to confidentiality.

Issues of equality and individual needs will be addressed and supported in line with Longden Ltd's Equality and Diversity Policy.

Dignity At Work – Equality and Diversity Policy

LONGDEN LTD embraces the belief that all human beings are equal and different and its culture of promoting equality and valuing diversity is firmly rooted in that conviction.

LONGDEN LTD takes its responsibilities seriously in promoting increased awareness of its beliefs, values and accompanying behaviours amongst its staff, learners and organisations and individuals with whom it comes into contact by ensuring fair, respectful and un-biased treatment of all, encompassing their personal skills, individual needs, limitations, beliefs, culture and values.

LONGDEN LTD aims to promote access to learning and vocational achievement to all groups of people in modern society, including those with special needs and those living in rural and less accessible areas by offering a variety of modes of access to learning, development and achievement.

LONGDEN LTD values the unique skills, experience and perspectives of every individual, finding ways to bring out the best in every employee and learner and recognises the business benefits these differences bring.

For both learners, employers and employees alike, LONGDEN LTD promotes a culture and provides a service of equality and fairness in recruitment, assessment of capabilities and skills, assessment and feedback on performance and matters of discipline and conduct.

LONGDEN LTD also respects the privacy of individuals and does not believe that any one person should be treated as a token representative of a group of people or their beliefs and values.

LONGDEN LTD is specifically committed to:

Age (The Code of Practice on Age Diversity in Employment)

LONGDEN LTD actively recognises the business benefits of an age-diverse workforce, welcoming the skills and experience of people of all ages. All members of staff are treated fairly in their cycle of employment from recruitment, selection, promotion, training and development, redundancy and retirement.

Rehabilitation of Offenders (The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974)

LONGDEN LTD acknowledges two key responsibilities in this area:

- ❖ To those people who may have 'spent' criminal convictions
- ❖ To people who may be considered to be members of 'vulnerable' groups

There will be no discrimination in the recruitment of personnel who may have spent criminal convictions, however LONGDEN LTD will consider the safety of vulnerable groups who receives its services and will seek to protect young people under the age of 18, the

elderly and mentally impaired, certain professions such as the care industry, self-regulatory organisations such including finance services and also Government bodies.

Sex Discrimination (Sex Discrimination Act 1976)

LONGDEN LTD actively promotes a culture of equality and fairness in recruitment, selection, promotion, training and development, recruitment and retirement regardless of the sex or sexual orientation of the member of staff.

This also promotes equality for people who choose to change their sex and transsexuals are protected by the beliefs of LONGDEN LTD's Dignity at Work Policy.

Maternity and Parental leave rights are actively maintained and operated within the organisation ensuring that the life/work balance is maintained. LONGDEN LTD also subscribes to the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003 in that there is fair treatment of heterosexual, homosexual and bisexual employees whilst in employment and ensure that they are not subject to post-termination harassment.

Race (Race Relations Act 1976 and Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2003)

LONGDEN LTD is committed to ensuring that no individual or group to whom it offers or provides a service or employment should be subject to discrimination on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, national or ethnic origin. LONGDEN LTD is working to ensure that all racial and ethnic groups within its business location are exposed to opportunities for employment, learning and development and achievement of vocational qualifications.

Disability (Disability Discrimination Act 1995)

LONGDEN LTD is committed to offering Equal Employment opportunities to job applicants with physical limitations and supporting them to work alongside more fully able team members. LONGDEN LTD offers support, guidance and access to assessment towards the provision of specialist aids and equipment.

Staff are encouraged to be aware of the needs of physically limited or disabled colleagues and learners to understand their special needs and arrangements for training events, meetings, audio and visual materials and physical environment.

Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998

Should a member of staff need to disclose any of the following:

- ❖ A crime
- ❖ A failure to comply with legal obligations
- ❖ A miscarriage of justice
- ❖ A health and safety threat
- ❖ Damage to the environment

LONGDEN LTD will take no adverse action. LONGDEN LTD will ensure that the employee feels it safe to make the disclosure and that they will suffer no detrimental treatment by doing so or that any evidence will be destroyed.

Human Rights (The Human Rights Act 1998)

This is an over-arching and recent Act which incorporates the European Convention on Human Rights into UK law.

There are many articles included in this Act and LONGDEN LTD acknowledges these articles in connection with the personnel and work of the company:

Article 8 – Right to respect for private and family life

This article underpins the Data Protection Act

Article 9 – Freedom of thought, conscience and religion

Article 10 – Freedom of Expression

Article 14 – Prohibition of discrimination

Article 17 – Prohibition of abuse of Rights

These articles are regarded as significant. In terms of Article 9, LONGDEN LTD recognises that worship in any religion may take place under circumstances and at times which vary from the predominant UK religion of Christianity. LONGDEN LTD is committed to allowing team members the freedom to worship in privacy and will provide a private area for them to do so and will accommodate, where practicable, the working patterns associated with religious belief systems and in accordance with the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003. LONGDEN LTD is committed to ensuring that no employee suffers discrimination on the grounds of religious belief, religion or similar philosophical belief. That fairness also extends after the member of staff has left LONGDEN LTD's employment.

Article 10 - Freedom of Expression

Whilst LONGDEN LTD wish in no way to curb an individual's right to express themselves freely, it must be clear that any unwanted and unwarranted behaviour will be investigated and may result in the suspension of the Individual whilst investigations are made. Any behaviour which constitutes harassment or discrimination will not be tolerated at LONGDEN LTD and will be treated seriously and may lead to disciplinary action.

Carole Longden
Managing Director